

December 2002

## From the Captain's Desk

Hello Shipmates!

Our active participation in the Naval Reserve has never been more important to our Navy and country. As you have noticed in the television and written press, the rhetoric regarding the current war on terrorism and a potential conflict with Iraq continues to intensify. Although higher authority has given no indication that a larger scale mobilization will be necessary, we must be prepared when and if such a call comes.

As I have discussed in my past letters, we have continued our sustainment mobilization in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. We currently have just over 500 of our Readiness Command Southwest shipmates on active duty in support of these 2 operations. And, our mobilized shipmates continue to receive rave reviews regarding the contributions they are making in this capacity. We all intuitively know that a larger scale mobilization in support of Persian Gulf operations is dependent upon the outcome of the ongoing United Nation's weapons inspections in Iraq. Only time will tell.

As a contingency, we have focused our attention on individual mobilization readiness. A Mobilization Readiness Standdown is currently being conducted at every Reserve center in the Naval Reserve claimancy during the month of December. Although our overall mobilization readiness level remains high, the purpose of the standdown is to review our current status and take the extra steps necessary to attain the highest possible readiness levels, individually and collectively. Please make sure that you actively participate in this standdown and inform your chain of command if you need assistance in this endeavor.

I would like to thank each and every member of the Readiness Command Southwest team, including drilling Reservists, Full-Time Support staffs, active military and civilian personnel, as well as your families, for your dedication, loyalty, and patriotism. The importance of the sacrifices and contributions you all make cannot be overstated. What could be more important than the war against terrorism and controlling weapons of mass destruction?

I wish you and your families a happy holiday season! May we experience fair winds and following seas and Godspeed as we navigate the waters of the future.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. M. Erickson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "M".

G. M. ERICKSON  
Captain, U.S. Naval Reserve